

THE
MAGDALEN:
OR,
Dying Penitent.

EXEMPLIFIED
IN THE DEATH OF
F. S.

Who died April, 1763, aged Twenty-six Years.

To which is added

A
SHORT ACCOUNT
OF
POOR JOSEPH.

*This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance,
that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save
sinners.*

DUBLIN:
Printed by B. DUGDALE, No. 150, Capel-Street.

MDCCCLXXXIX.

A N
A C C O U N T
OF THE DEATH OF
F. S.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

DEAR SIR,

AS you wanted to see an account of the person I mentioned to you when we last met, set down in writing, I comply most readily with your desire, and send it you as follows.

THIS young woman was the daughter of a gentleman in the army, had a genteel and liberal education, but was reduced by various distresses to great poverty and want. One who had known her in her more prosperous days, took advantage of her indigent circumstances, and by many fair promises, and acts of pretended kindness, drew her into a criminal intimacy with him; she was with child by him, and for some time after she was delivered he contributed something towards the maintenance of the child; but growing tired of her, he left both child and mother without doing any thing farther for them.

F. S. had a mother with whom she lived, but who could by no means support the expence now thrown upon her. Various were the ways by which *F. S.* was endeavouring to maintain herself; having a genteel person, a good voice, and a lively genius, she went upon the stage at the little theatre in the *Hay-Market*; after this she strolled with players about the country, but meeting with many disagreeable things in this way of life, she quitted it, and went

to

to work at her needle ; this expedient too failed her : after which she went upon the town and turned prostitute ; while she was in the midst of all her wickedness she had strong remonstrances from her conscience, insomuch as to occasion many tears to flow from her eyes ; conviction of sin pursued her wherever she went : she would walk out into *St. James's Park*, set herself down upon a bench, and there weep for a considerable time together ; and when she has had men come to her lodgings, she has made herself drunk to get rid of the terrors and anguish of her mind ; but this would not do, this sin added to the rest still distressed her more, till she was absolutely driven from her lodgings, resolving to take shelter in the *Magdalen House* : she continued there about three months, when something happened which occasioned her leaving it. Going from thence she looked back upon her past life with the utmost abhorrence, and was resolved rather to perish with war than return to it again. She therefore sold the few things she had, leaving herself but bare necessaries, and determined to go into some part of the world where she was not known. She went into *Kent*, and it being hay-time she hired herself to a farmer near *Canterbury*, who employed her amongst his haymakers for ten-pence a day. Here she often reflected with pain and bitterness of spirit on her past life, yet thanking and praising God who had convinced her of the error of her way, and by his providence and grace had delivered her from it. She comforted herself that though she fared but meanly and laboured hard, yet she was eating the bread of honest industry. When the hay-harvest was over, she was dismissed the farmer's service, and proceeding to *Canterbury* she got a place in a tradesman's house. Here she lived till by excessive hard work, being of a de-

licate and tender frame, she caught a violent cold, which proved the beginning of her last illness, for it ended in a consumption, which in about four months brought her to the grave.

When dismissed from her service she soon consumed the little she had saved in the necessities of life, and was then reduced to beggary. One day being at the cathedral prayers (which she constantly attended) she was observed to weep very bitterly by one of the clergymen that attended there; after service was over he called her to him, and said, "Young woman, what or who are you?—" "You seem very sorrowful." Said she, "Sir, I am a poor girl heavy laden with my sins, and I desire to lay them at the REDEEMER'S feet."—"You seem very poor," said he, "Indeed, sir," saith she, "God knoweth I am poor in body and in soul." He gave her money, and bid her come to his house every day for victuals, this she did for some time, till finding her disorder increase upon her, she resolved to return to *London* that she might see her mother once more before she died. Accordingly she set out, and under every circumstance of poverty, pain and sickness, reached *London*, where, by the assistance of a former acquaintance of her's, she procured a wretched lodging at sixpence a week; here she lay about a week destitute of every help proper for her case; and thinking herself near her dissolution she sent for her mother, who came to her and found her in the condition above described: the utmost pity and compassion seized upon the mother's heart, which instantly made her forget some differences which had arisen between them; a chair being brought she was carried home to her mother's house, and laid upon a bed from which she never rose more.

The

The interval between her coming to her mother's house and her death, was about a month, during which time at her and her mother's request I visited her. I had known her in the former part of her life before all her distresses, and not having seen her for many years, was, as you may easily imagine, under much concern to find her in so different a situation from what I had remembered her in former times; but my concern was soon abated and my utmost wonder excited, by the testimony she bore to the power and love of God our Saviour. She acquainted me with the several circumstances of her past life before recited; adding withal, "O sir, I abhor myself—I abhor my polluted body and my more polluted soul—I am the filthiest wretch upon this earth—but there is mercy—that holy and immaculate JESUS knows my sorrows and sees my deep misery." Said I, "Do you believe him able to save you?" "Yes," she said, "I believe one drop of his blood can quench a thousand flaming worlds." "You believe he is able, but do you believe he is willing?" "Willing," said she, "he had no errand upon earth but to shew his willingness to seek and save that which was lost; my faith in him is like a strong cable fixed to an immovable rock. If the Lord pleases to make me an example, and therefore continues me here in the violent pains I now feel, ever so long, I am willing, I am ready to suffer it all; but should he please to release me, death hath lost its sting, and now death shall be my life."

I came again to see her the next day. I asked her how she did; she said, "My body is weaker but my faith is stronger—I am in pain all over, my head, ears and bowels are racked, but had I strength I could dance—my heart dances within

" me." Turning to her mother she said, " Ma-
 " dam, look on me, I am dying, but see how I
 " am comforted; let me have no tears I beg :
 " look on me be sure when I die, when you see the
 " last breath go from me, clap your hands and say,
 " God blefs her, she is gone to glory." Putting
 her hands and arms out of bed, which were
 now reduced to skin and bone, she looked on them
 with great earnestness, and at the same time tran-
 sport in her countenance, and said, " This is a de-
 " lightful sight, no beauty can compare with this
 " anatomy: these old clothes of mine are worn
 " out, but I shall soon be clothed afresh." One
 standing by repeated *Job* xix. 26. " Yes," said
 she, " worms shall destroy this body, but no
 " worm can touch my soul." One of her old com-
 panions standing by, who hearing she was ill came
 to visit her, she thus admonished her; " Look on
 " me, I am a young woman, and am dying; so
 " are you, though you think not of it: let me in-
 " treat you to avoid the pernicious ways we have
 " walked in, and may the goodness of God to me
 " prevail on you to turn to Him, and turn no more
 " to folly." " Oh," said she, " that all my sins
 " were written, that all the world might see the
 " blackness of my crimes, and detest them—Oh
 " that the mercies of CHRIST to my soul were
 " written also, and that might turn their hearts—
 " How tenderly has he dealt with me a poor sinful
 " worm!"—One observed she had deep obligations
 to him; " Oh yes," said she, " I am obliged to
 " him for sparing me in my sins, I am obliged to
 " him for my distresses, for my pains, for this sick-
 " bed, this delightful sick-bed, no coach and six
 " so delightful, I would not change it for all the
 " world; but how above all am I obliged to the
 " Blessed LORD for calling me by his grace, and
 " delivering

“ delivering my soul! Oh my poor weak body,
 “ was my body as strong as my faith I should be
 “ another *Samson*.” Her great thankfulness to all
 that came to visit her, was also an indication of her
 unfeigned humility, she not only thanking them
 for their kindness, but noticing at the same time
 how unworthy she was of any favour at all.

Being a good deal spent with speaking, her voice
 failed her, so that she could not be heard at any
 distance from the bed; but I sat close by it and
 could hear her in broken accents say, “ O what
 “ comfort—what pleasure in dying—O holy and
 “ immaculate Lamb of God, how is it that thou
 “ canst look upon such a sinful wretch as I am?”
 Another time she said, “ Mother, do not be a
 “ coward, do not weep for my happiness.” “ How
 “ can I give you up?” said her mother, “ my bur-
 “ then is great.” “ Do like me,” said the dying
 Penitent, “ cast your burden upon CHRIST and he
 “ will bear it for you.”

She said something of unkindness she had met with
 in the world, but added, “ God bless them, I free-
 “ ly forgive them all: I was hungry and they gave
 “ me no meat, thirsty and they gave me no drink;
 “ but the blessed JESUS will not let the poorest
 “ meanest lamb in his flock want any thing that
 “ can do them good.” She then broke forth into
 singing,

*The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
 And feed me with a shepherd's care;
 His presence shall my wants supply,
 And guard me with a watchful eye:
 My noon-day walks he shall attend,
 And all my midnight hours defend,
 And then,*

Tho'

*Tho' in the paths of death I tread,
With gloomy horrors overspread,
My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord art with me still:
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,
And guide me thro' the dreadful shade.*

“ And so it shall,” added she, with an earnestness and transport not to be described—“ Oh that all may avoid my sins, and follow my strong faith when they come to die.”

“ Why,” said I, “ you turn preacher, you are preaching JESUS CHRIST to us all.” “ Preaching,” said she, “ Oh that I could preach to all the world, and tell them how gracious the Lord is—preach JESUS CHRIST, what else can I preach—what else can any one preach who knows him?—JESUS, JESUS, Oh that Name! that sweet Name is life to my soul: I trust that Name will dwell upon my unworthy tongue as long as it can move within my lips.” She then again broke forth into singing, and sang

*Praise GOD from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.*

Thus did this young creature lie on her sick-bed, praising and blessing God, and filling all that came to see her with wonder at the triumphs of her faith over the enemies of her soul.

Another time I came to see her and she had had a great conflict with the enemy, who seemed to have thrust sore at her that she might fall, but she was more than conqueror. She said to me, “ Oh, sir, “ it seemed to me as though a legion of devils
“ have

“ have been ready to seize me, but glory be to God
 “ they cannot touch me; no, no, that cross held
 “ up in that right hand has put them all to flight,
 “ my sins have been represented to me as black as
 “ a sackcloth of hair, but the blood of CHRIST
 “ hath washed me whiter than snow.”

From this time her bodily strength being almost
 exhausted, she lay without being able to speak as
 she had done, but her countenance spake with most
 forcible eloquence the transports of her soul; and
 when the happy moment of her dismissal came,
 her mother was near her, and observing her lips
 move, and putting her ear near to her mouth,
 heard her whisper, “ Holy, holy, holy, Lord
 “ God of Sabaoth, into thy hands I commend
 “ my spirit!” She then fetched a short sigh or
 two, and died without the least sign of pain.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

M. M.



A

SHORT ACCOUNT

O F

POOR JOSEPH.

A POOR, half-witted man, named Joseph, whose employment was to go on errands and carry parcels, passing through the streets of London one day, heard singing in a place of worship: he went into it, having a large parcel of yarn hanging over his shoulders. It was Dr. Calamy's Meeting-house, St. Mary's, Aldermanbury. A very polite well-dressed audience surrounded the Doctor, who read that text in 1 Timothy, i. 13, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." From this he preached, in the clearest manner the ancient apostolic Gospel—the contents of the faithful saying, viz. "That there is eternal salvation for the vilest sinner, solely through the worthiness of Jesus Christ, the God that made all things." "Not many rich, not many noble, not many wise are called by this doctrine," saith the Apostle, but "God hath chosen the weak things of this world, to confound the things which are mighty." While the elegant assembly listlessly heard this doctrine, and if they were struck with any thing at all, it was only with a brilliant expression, or well-turned period that dropt from the Doctor, Joseph in rags, gazing with astonishment, never lifted his eyes off the preacher, but drank in with eagerness all he said,
and

and trudging home-ward, was heard thus muttering to himself as he went along: " Joseph never heard this before, Jesus Christ, the God who made all things, came into the world to save sinners like Joseph, and this is true, it is a faithful saying." Not long after this, Joseph was seized with a fever, and was dangerously ill: as he tossed upon his bed, his constant language was, " Joseph is the chief of sinners, but Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and Joseph loves him for that." His neighbours who came to see him, wondered at hearing him always dwell on *this* and *only this*. Some of the religious sort addressed him in the following manner: " But what say you of your own heart, Joseph, is there no token for God above, yet? No loving change there?—have you closed in with Christ, by acting faith on him?" " Ah! no," says he, " Joseph can act nothing—Joseph has nothing to say for himself, but that he is the chief of sinners, yet seeing it is a faithful saying, that Jesus Christ, who made all things, came to save sinners, why may not Joseph after all be saved?" One man finding out where Joseph heard this doctrine, on which he dwelt so uniformly and with delight, went and asked Dr. Calamy to come and visit him: he came, but Joseph was now very weak and had not spoke for some time: though told of the Doctor's arrival, he took no notice of him; but when the Dr. began to speak to him, so soon as he heard the sound of his voice again, instantly he sprung upon his elbow, and seizing him by the hand, exclaimed, as loud as he could with his now feeble and trembling voice, " Oh Sir! you are the friend of the Lord Jesus, whom I heard speak so well of him, and whom I love for what you said about him: Joseph is the chief of sinners, but it is a faithful saying, that Jesus Christ the God who made all things, came

“ came to save sinners ; and why not Joseph ? O
 “ pray to that Jesus for me, that he may save me :
 “ tell him that Joseph thinks he loves him, for com-
 “ ing into the world to save such sinners as Joseph.”
 The Doctor prayed ; when he concluded, Joseph
 thanked him most kindly. He then put his hand
 under the pillow and pulled out an old rag, in
 which were tied up five guineas, and putting it in-
 to the Doctor’s hand (which he had kept all this
 time close in his) he thus addressed him : “ Joseph,
 “ in his folly, had laid up this to keep him in his old
 “ age : but Joseph will never see old-age—take it,
 “ and divide it amongst the poor friends of the Lord
 “ Jesus, and tell them, that Joseph gave it to them
 “ for his sake who came into the world to save sin-
 “ ners, of whom he is the chief.” So saying, he re-
 clined his head ; his exertions, in talking, had been
 too much for him, so that he instantly expired.—
 Dr. Calamy left this scene, but not without shed-
 ding many tears over Joseph, and used to tell this
 little story after, with much feeling, as the most af-
 fecting occurrence he ever met with.

Reader!

Jesus the friend of Joseph is thy friend: the
 same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Go to him
 as a guilty, polluted sinner, and thou shalt find
 mercy at his hands —Art thou convinced, that
 thou art the chief of sinners?—Remember that Je-
 sus Christ died for sinners: go unto him who graci-
 ously invites thee to be happy, and believing in
 the friend of sinners, thou shalt experience re-
 demption in his blood, even the forgiveness of all
 thy sins. Acts xvi 31. “ Believe on the Lord Je-
 “ sus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” That it may
 be thy happy portion, is the fervent prayer of

Thine for Christ’s sake,

J F.